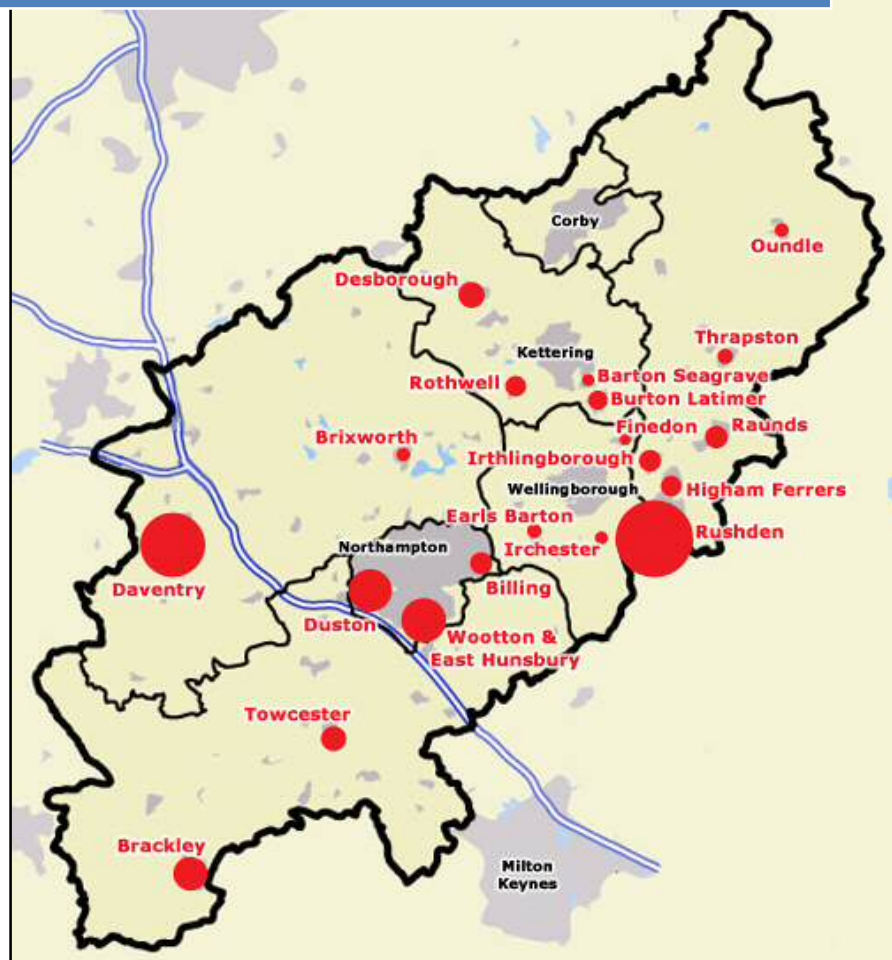


Year ending
31 March 2019

Annual Report of the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils



Empowering Parish
& Town Councils

Chairman's Report

One year on from my last report and Northants CALC is as busy as ever supporting our parishes through the Local Government Reorganisation in our county.

Our CEO and Deputy CEO, Danny Moody and Lesley Sambrook-Smith respectively, have traversed Northamptonshire to attend regular county meetings of officers and councillors from principal authorities, to ensure that the parish voice is heard. After all, parish and town councils are the constant form of governance, whereas all the county, districts and boroughs will cease to exist, if and when the government gives final legislative effect to the creation of two unitaries.

Northants CALC understands the role that parish and town councils can play within a new unitary structure. However, it is clear that some parishes will be keen to take on further services from principal councils but that others will have neither the desire nor the capacity. Our role is to support all parishes with regular, pertinent updates and advice to assist them in whatever direction they decide.

As we reported last year, our officers are advising Northampton, Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough in their possible creation of town councils. We look forward, following due process, to any or all of them being welcomed into our parish sector.

Meanwhile Northants CALC continues to offer high quality support to our member councils with enquiries, advice, training, internal audit service and the DPO service, (Data Protection Officer).

Our sincere appreciation to those parish clerks who volunteer their time to our Members Enquiry Service (MES), as their support to Northants CALC is invaluable; particularly with the uncertain future landscape of local government in Northamptonshire.

In November 2018 the government announced that the May 2019 elections for parish and principal councils were to be postponed until 2020. Time will tell whether the number of parish councillors will be affected, either by those standing again or stepping down. Northants CALC is committed to the promotion of parish councils and of councillors serving their communities, as their prominence may well be enhanced following the likely creation of the two unitary authorities.



In December 2018 the board was sad to learn that David Linnell, a past chairman, had passed away. David joined the board of Northants CALC in 2007 and, as vice chairman in 2010 when the Association incorporated, he was one of the four founding directors. David was elected as Chairman of the Board in November 2011 and served for two years, leading the Association as it continued to develop and modernise. He retired from the board in 2013 but remained an active member of the Northants CALC Internal Audit Service team. Richard Lewis, Danny Moody and I attended the funeral to represent the Association and member councils.

In March 2019 Fiona Baker resigned from the board following her appointment as Cabinet Member for Children's Services at Northamptonshire County Council. As a town, district and county councillor, Fiona brought a wealth of experience to the board and her contribution will be missed. There

was a very strong and encouraging response to the vacancy notice however and I was delighted to be able to welcome Mr Chris Horsman to the board, who has a commercial background in sales and marketing and has been instrumental in the creation of the new Little Stanion Parish Council in Corby. I'm sure he will make a very valuable contribution to the Association.

Northants CALC Board, with its eight dedicated directors and highly motivated staff, is well placed and well informed to serve and guide our member councils through what seems to be the inevitable changes to governance for Northamptonshire.

The office is the first port of call for all members but should any chairman of a town or parish council or parish meeting in membership of the Association wish to contact me directly at any time please email me on the address below.

The whole team is looking forward to a bright future for our sector.

Lynne Taylor
Chairman, Northants CALC
ltaylor@northantscalc.com

Balance Sheet Summary

Northants CALC Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2019:

	£	£
	2018	2019
Fixed assets	2,025	1,150
Debtors	3,679	7,580
Cash at bank	125,179	125,576
Total Assets	130,883	134,306

	£	£
	2018	2019
Creditors	(35,945)	(35,501)
Receipts in advance	-	-
Current Liabilities	(35,945)	(35,501)

	£	£
	2018	2019
Assets less liabilities	94,938	98,805

Finance Report

A summary of the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2019 is appended to the Annual Report. The accounts are independently inspected by Kate Brown Accountants, Chartered Accountants, and submitted to Companies House under the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

The Association maintains a system of internal controls to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of its activities and operating procedures. A director is appointed with responsibility to scrutinise the internal controls and working practices, which has proved to be a very useful governance tool that helps improve risk identification and mitigation. The Internal Controls Director (ICD) carries out a minimum of three on-site checks per year and may check any system or procedure at will.



The Association ended the financial year with a surplus of £3,867, which was a better outcome than had been forecast where the original budget had predicted a deficit for y/e 31 March 2019 of £25,000. The reason for the large difference was an increase in receipts mainly from paid-for services, particularly training, and a successful Awards for All grant of £10,000 to help support the New Councils Project. The Association also kept tight control on all aspects of expenditure.

Planned deficit budgets remain part of the Association's medium-term financial plan, so it is essential that there is a continued focus on striving to increase income whilst working smarter. For example, in 2019/20 the Association will look to make more use of video conferencing to reduce staff travel costs and make most efficient use of staff time.

The Association's financial position is sound and stable, and it is well placed to cope with the short and medium-term financial outlook.

Corporate Governance

The board operates according to the following principles:

The board should be independent of the staff:

The board has determined that each director is independent in character and judgement and that there are no relationships or circumstances which are likely to affect their judgement or impair their independence.

Directors should be submitted for re-appointment annually:

Recommendations for re-appointment should not be assumed but be based on disclosed procedures and continued satisfactory performance.

There should be full disclosure of the board's membership:

A list of directors with biographies is available on the Association's web site.

The board should aim to have a balance of skills, experience, and knowledge:

The board operates a Composition & Diversity Policy that ensures that the board contains a good mix of clerks and councillors from small and large councils.

The board should undertake an annual review of its own performance:

All directors complete self-assessment forms that help identify strengths and weaknesses of the board.

The board should give attention to overall strategy:

The board monitors performance against its agreed strategy on an ongoing basis and reviews its overall strategy, including the viability of the Association in its current form.

Chief Executive's Report

Remember the Caller Report? It was published on 15 March 2018, just before the start of this report period. It precipitated the demise of the senior leadership team at Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) and paved the way for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the creation of two unitary councils to replace the county council and seven borough and district councils. LGR dominated our work for the whole of 2018/19.

In May 2018 the Commissioners arrived at NCC and, working with the new Leader, Cllr Matt Golby, personnel changes took place with a new Chief Executive, Theresa Grant, joining in July and bringing with her a new Section 151 officer to get a grip on the financial situation. A series of headline-grabbing warnings and Section 144 notices followed.

In the summer of 2018 the then Secretary of State (SoS) for Housing, Communities & Local Government, James Brokenshire (see, things have been happening nationally too!), called for the principal councils in Northamptonshire to design a proposal for creating unitary councils and a bid was duly submitted by all but Corby by the deadline of 31 August 2018. At the end of November, the SoS launched a consultation on the proposal and Northants CALC responded on behalf of member town and parish councils.

The announcement that the county would definitely be going unitary wasn't finally made until May 2019.

For parish and town councils LGR is a process to be interested in and to keep an eye on, but it is largely beyond their remit and capacity to influence the process directly. Through Northants CALC, parish and town councils can have an input, and certainly Lesley and I have taken every single opportunity to do so, but the big-ticket decisions are being made within a very small group of

principal council Leaders and Chief Officers.

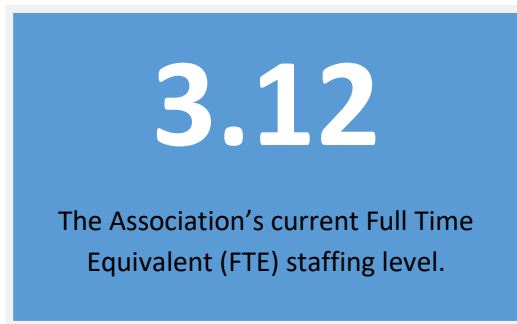
LGR will continue to be our main focus in 2019/20 and whilst we fully understand that for parish and town councils it is not the be-all and end-all, we see it as our job to keep across every detail and keep member councils informed of progress through regular reports in the bi-monthly *eUpdates*.

In 2018 in response to GDPR we created our Data Protection Officer (DPO) Service. The Northants CALC board decided to continue the service in 2018/19 introducing a small administration charge of £10 per council. Parish and town councils are not required in law to appoint a DPO, but if they do not the function and responsibility will almost inevitably fall to the clerk, which is potentially onerous and could cause a conflict of interest. Northants CALC is the only CALC in England that offers a DPO service to remove that difficulty for member councils and I am keen for it to continue. More and more is expected of parish and town councils in terms of governance and accountability, so if we can help shoulder some of that burden for our members, that must be a good thing.

The 2018 AGM, held on the first Saturday in October in Moulton was, once again, an uplifting event. In a return to the usual format our guest speakers were Nick Plumb, Policy Officer at Locality and Alistair Jones, Associate Professor at the Local Governance Research Unit (LGRU) at De Montfort University. Both gave very uplifting and informative presentations that, judging by all the questions, proved very thought-provoking for the one hundred and thirty-five delegates present. Glapthorn Parish Council was announced as the Northamptonshire Council of the Year; a council with fewer than 250 electors and a precept of less than £10,000 that in 2017 took out a loan to upgrade its street lighting to modern and energy efficient LED and in 2018 completed a Neighbourhood Plan

with 88% of votes cast in favour of adopting the plan with an incredible 61% turnout. The Neighbourhood Plan was delivered within budget and in under two years from start to finish. Glapthorn Parish Council is proof that “small” doesn’t mean “inactive” or “amateur”.

In staff news we were joined in June 2018 by Melody Pugsley as Administration Manager, replacing Linda Bain who retired in May. Deputy CEO, Lesley Sambrook Smith, who joined in June 2017 has quickly established herself as the go-to authority for parish and town councils on information governance, procurement and borrowing approvals. Northants CALC is very lucky to have Lesley, whose calm and practical approach is a godsend to member councils, and to me too!



At 31 March 2019 there are four members of staff at Northants CALC (3.12 FTE), so it is a small and very busy team. My thanks go to Anne, Lesley, Linda and now Melody for all their hard work and dedication over the year. I also pay tribute to the directors and vice presidents who provide direction and unstinting support, and whose contribution is largely unsung being mostly behind the scenes.

And finally, thank you to all the Clerks and Councillors who support the work of the Association and provide us with feedback and encouragement. When we hear that what we do is valued so highly it makes it an absolute pleasure to be at your service.

Danny Moody
Chief Executive
dmoody@northantscalc.com

Association Staff

Position	Name
Chief Executive	Danny Moody
Deputy Chief Executive	Lesley Sambrook Smith
Training Manager	Anne Kirkland
Admin Manager*	Linda Bain
Admin Manager**	Melody Pugsley

*To May 2018 **From June 2018

Honorary Officers & Auditor

The following were elected at the AGM on 6 October 2018 to serve for one year:

Name	Title
Vacancy	President
Jeffery Greenwell	Vice President
Catherine Lomax	Vice President
Gwen Radcliffe	Vice President
Gordon Shorley	Vice President
Kate Brown Accountants	Auditors

Board of Directors

The following were elected at the AGM on 6 October 2018 to serve for one year:

Name	Current Role
Peter Allen	Director
Fiona Baker*	Director
Sara Homer	Director
Lynn Lavender	Director
Richard Lewis	Director
Mike Scott	Vice Chairman
Lynne Taylor	Chairman
Gill Wells	Director

*To 4 March 2019

Membership Fee

In Northamptonshire there are 200 parish councils, 13 town councils and 51 parish meetings (civil parishes without a parish council). The largest council is Rushden Town Council (electorate 23,291) and the smallest council is Brampton Ash Parish Council (electorate 58). The smallest parish meeting is Althorp Parish Meeting (electorate 12).

The highest precepting council in 2018/19 is Rushden Town Council (£925,523) and the lowest (of the ones that precept at all) is Catesby Parish Meeting (£90). Together, councils in Northamptonshire raised £11.4 million in precept in 2018/19.

98% of the councils in the county are in membership of the Association. The membership fees are set by the AGM each October.

	£	£
Year Ending 31 st March	2019	2020
Base rate (per council)	154.82	158.38
County Association (per elector)	0.2323	0.2376
NALC affiliation (per elector)	0.0686	0.0699

Nb: The Northants CALC fee for councils with 10,000 to 30,000 electors is capped at £2,534.14 and for councils with more than 30,000 electors the cap is £4,603.50.

Internal Audit Service

183 of the 213 parish and town councils in Northamptonshire used the Internal Audit Service from Northants CALC for the year ending 31 March 2019.

A team of specialist auditors are contracted by the Association to provide the service to parish and town councils, ranging from the smallest with annual expenditure of less than £1,000 to the largest with annual expenditure in excess of £1,000,000.

The purpose of internal audit is to review whether the systems of financial and other controls over a council's activities and operating procedures are effective.

Internal audit function must be independent of the other financial controls and procedures of the council.

The person or persons carrying out internal audit must also be competent to carry out the role in a way that will meet the business needs of each local council.

Member Enquiry Service (MES)

The Member Enquiry Service (MES) is an email-based enquiry service for member councils that provides a timely response to non-complex, generic enquiries.

In the year to 31 March 2019, MES responded to 143 enquiries from member councils on an extremely diverse range of subjects.

MES is operated on a volunteer basis by a team of four knowledgeable and dedicated clerks all of whom are CiLCA trained. Continued thanks to Nikki Daft, Erica Fothergill, Helen Hoier and Rosie Smart for their support and hard work during the year.

Data Protection Officer (DPO) Service

The DPO Service provides councils with a dedicated email address and named officers to act as DPO. The role of the DPO is to inform and advise the Council and its employees about their obligations to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and other data protection laws, to monitor compliance and advise on data protection impact assessments, train staff and conduct internal audits.



The DPO is the first point of contact for supervisory authorities and for individuals whose data is processed (including employees, councillors and members of the public).

189 of the county's 213 parish and town councils subscribed to the DPO Service in 2018/19.

Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS)

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has further reviewed and amended the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS).

All councils are encouraged to consider going for accreditation. There's a level for everyone: Foundation recognises

sound standard practice; Quality recognises good practice and Quality Gold recognises best practice in all aspects. Councils can accredit at one level and then work towards a higher level if they choose.

Councillor Panel

The Northants CALC Councillor Panel was established in 2012 to provide the Association with a quick way to understand the attitude, thoughts and feelings of the councillorship in the county. Around 120 Councillors are registered on the panel, which operates on an e-mail basis. We send out questions and surveys (normally using SurveyMonkey) and give the Councillor Panel a few days to respond. The results are used as a guide and they help inform our work. It's not a formal consultation mechanism and the responses are those of individual councillors, not councils, but it does give us a very quick and cost-effective way of engaging with Councillors.

This year we consulted the Councillor Panel on issues such as the prevailing mood and outlook of councillors, Local Government Reorganisation, and community resilience.

The Councillor Panel is extremely useful to the Association and all councillors are encouraged to sign up for it, even if just on a trial basis. All you have to do to sign up to the panel is send an email to info@northantscalc.com with your expression of interest and you will be added to the distribution list. Typical response rates are in the order of 50 – 70%, so not every member of the panel responds to every survey. If you would like to know more before signing up, please contact Northants CALC by telephone on 01327 831482 or e-mail info@northantscalc.com and request a copy of the Councillor Panel Terms of Reference.

Printed or electronic copies of this Annual Report and further details are available on request. Please e-mail info@northantscalc.com.

**Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Ltd
Company limited by guarantee**

Accounts for year ending 31 March 2019

Company information

Directors	Lynne Jane Taylor Lynn Lavender Richard Lewis Peter Robert Allen Michael John Scott Sara Marie Homer Fiona Elizabeth Baker (resigned 01/19) Gillian Helen Wells
Secretary	Daniel Moody
Company number	07335699
Registered office	6 Litchborough Business Park Northampton Road Litchborough Northamptonshire NN12 8JB

NORTHANTS CALC

Profit & Loss for 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

Note	Income	01/04/18-31/03/19	01/04/17-31/03/18
		£	£
	Membership Subscriptions	117,836	114,555
	Training	34,537	26,255
	IAS Council Income	35,480	34,454
	Grants	10,000	10,000
1	Transparency Fund Grant	0	69,784
2	Other Income	1,832	518
		199,685	255,565
	Expenditure		
	NALC Affiliation Fee	21,212	20,565
	Internal Auditor Fees	24,392	21,985
	Training Costs	8,752	6,890
1	Transparency Fund	0	70,321
	Conference and Meeting Costs	1,935	2,116
	Insurance inc Professional Indemnity	811	795
		57,102	122,672
	Gross Profit/(Loss):	142,583	132,893
	Overheads		
	Staff Costs	110,492	100,085
	Rent	8,731	8,400
	Water Rates	164	121
	Service charges	200	373
	Premises Insurance	297	293
	Light and Heat	2,781	2,074
	Repairs and Maintenance	776	542
	Printing Posting and Stationery	1,786	2,782
	Telephone	2,071	2,193
	Travel - Staff	2,839	2,589
	Travel - Directors	824	694
	Accountancy	1,003	120
	Bank Charges	324	243
	Subscription, Membership and Professional Fees	2,015	2,051
	General Expenses	3,544	2,617
3	Increased Internal Audit Creditor	0	2,799
	Office Equipment & Fixtures & Fittings Depreciation	1,059	1,051
		138,906	129,028
	Bank Deposit Interest	190	387
	Net Profit/(Loss):	3,867	4,252

NORTHANTS CALC

Balance Sheet as of 31 March 2019

Note	Fixed Assets	01/04/18- 31/03/19	01/04/17- 31/03/18
		£	£
	Office Equipment	2,209	3,076
	Depreciation	1,059	1,051
		1,150	2,025
	Current Assets		
	Current Account	88,082	87,961
	Savings Account	37,504	37,314
4	Petty Cash and Credit card	-10	-96
	Debtors	7,580	3,679
		133,156	128,858
	Current Liabilities		
	Creditors	850	3,154
	IAS - Council Fees	34,453	32,593
	Members' Liability Funds	198	198
		35,501	35,945
	Current Assets less Current Liabilities	97,655	92,913
	Total Assets less Current Liabilities	98,805	94,938
	Capital & Reserves		
	General Fund	94,938	90,687
	Profit & Loss Account	3,867	4,251
		98,805	94,938

At a meeting of the board of directors held on 18 May 2019 it was agreed to send these accounts for independent inspection.

Signed by



Date: 18 May 2019

NORTHANTS CALC

Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss - Explanatory Notes Year Ending 31 March 2019

- Note 1 Transparency Fund ended on 31 March 2018
- Note 2 Other income. £,1243.65 includes Little Stanion IT reimbursement, broadband costs reclaimed and council dividers sold, £118.17 which is literature sold (Good Councillor Guides) and £470.00 which is AGM income
- Note 3 IAS income previously treated as receipts in advance (RIA), now applied as income in-year
- Note 4 Petty cash balance £26.68 and balance owing on credit card £36.70 equals -£10 net

Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited

Chartered Accountants' report to the board of directors on the preparation of the unaudited statutory accounts of Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited for the year ended 31 March 2019.

In order to assist you to fulfil your duties under the Companies Act 2006, we have prepared for your approval the accounts of Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils Limited for the year ended 31 March 2019 which comprise of the Profit and Loss Account, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Changes in Equity and the related notes from the company's accounting records and from information and explanations you have given us.

As a practising member firm of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, we are subject to its ethical and other professional requirements which are detailed at icaew.com/membershandbook.

Our work has been undertaken in accordance with AAF 2/10 as detailed at icaew.com/compilation.

Kate Brown Accountants
Chartered Accountants
The Annexe, Rectory Farm
Cranford Road
Great Addington
Northamptonshire
NN14 4BQ

19 September 2019